

Crediting Deli Meats in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

This guidance applies to meals and snacks served in child care centers, family day care homes, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and adult day care centers that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). For information on the CACFP meal patterns for children and crediting foods, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpages. For information on the CACFP adult meal patterns and crediting foods, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages.



Deli meats (such as turkey, chicken, ham, roast beef, salami, and bologna) credit as the meat/meat alternates component in the CACFP meal patterns for children and the CACFP adult meal patterns. CACFP sponsors must ensure that the serving of deli meat provides the required amount of the meat/meat alternates component for CACFP meals and snacks. The amount of deli meat that provides 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component depends on the product's ingredients, and varies greatly between different brands and types.

- **100 percent meat:** Products that are 100 percent meat without added liquids (e.g., water or broth), binders, and extenders credit on an ounce-per-ounce basis (actual serving weight). For example, 1 ounce of deli meat that is 100 percent meat credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component.
- **Added liquids, binders, and extenders:** Products with added liquids, binders, and extenders credit based on the percentage of meat in the product formula. A 1-ounce serving of these products does **not** credit as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component. The crediting depends on the amount of meat per serving, excluding added ingredients. For example, one brand of deli meat might require 1.6 ounces to credit as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component, while another brand might require 2.3 ounces to credit as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component.



Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP

Required Crediting Documentation

CACFP sponsors must obtain appropriate crediting documentation for all deli meats with added liquids, binders, and extenders. Acceptable documentation includes 1) an original Child Nutrition (CN) label from the product carton, or a photocopy or photograph of the CN label shown attached to the original product carton; or 2) a product formulation statement (PFS) signed by an official of the manufacturer stating the amount of the meat/meat alternates component contained in one serving of the product.

For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP](#), [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP](#), and the USDA's [Product Formulation Statement \(Product Analysis\) for Meat/Meat Alternate Products](#) and [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#). For additional guidance, visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Child Care Programs" or "Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers" sections of the CSDE's CACFP webpages.

Liquids, Binders, and Extenders

The ingredients statements below show examples of turkey breast products that contain added liquid, binders, and extenders.

- Ingredients: Turkey breast, *water, modified cornstarch*, contains less than 2% of sodium lactate, salt, sugar, sodium phosphates, *carrageenan*, natural flavor, sodium diacetate, potassium chloride, sodium ascorbate, sodium nitrite, caramel color.
- Ingredients: Turkey breast meat, *turkey broth*, contains 2% or less salt, sugar, *carrageenan*, sodium phosphate, sodium acetate, sodium diacetate, flavoring.



Products with added liquids, binders, and extenders cannot credit as the meat/meat alternates component without a CN label or PFS stating the amount of the meat/meat alternates component per serving. Menu planners must review product labels and ingredients to determine if commercial products contain added liquids, binders, and extenders.

Table 1 lists examples of ingredients that are binders and extenders.

Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP

Table 1. Examples of binders and extenders ¹

Agar-agar	Dried milk	Sodium caseinate
Algin (a mixture of sodium alginate, calcium carbonate and calcium gluconate/lactic acid)	Dry or dried whey	Soy flour (APP) ²
	Enzyme (rennet) treated calcium-reduced dried skim milk and calcium lactate	Soy protein concentrate (APP) ²
Bread	Gums, vegetable	Starchy vegetable flour
Calcium-reduced dried skim milk	Isolated soy protein (APP) ²	Tapioca dextrin
Carrageenan	Locust bean gum	Vegetable starch
Carboxymethyl cellulose (cellulose gum)	Methyl cellulose	Wheat gluten
Cereal	Modified food starch	Whey
	Reduced lactose whey	Whey protein concentrate (APP) ²
	Reduced minerals	Xanthan gum

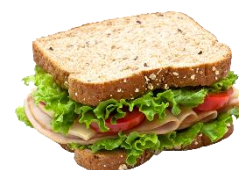
¹ Binders and extenders are defined by the USDA's regulations for the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) ([9 CFR 318.7](#)).

² Products may contain these ingredients if they meet the USDA's requirements for alternate protein products (APPs). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP](#).

Developing Recipes for Deli Meats

Different brands and types of deli meat credit differently. To ensure proper crediting, CACFP sponsors should develop standardized recipes for menu items that contain deli meats, such as sandwiches and other entrees. The recipes should indicate the deli meat's contribution to the meat/meat alternates component based on a specific weight of a specific brand. For ease of portioning, round up the weight of the deli meat in the recipe to the nearest measure. For example, the recipe should list 1.2 ounces as 1.25 ounces and 1.6 ounces as 1.75 ounces.

If a CACFP sponsor makes the same food item using different brands of deli meats that credit differently, the standardized recipe should include the required weight of each brand. For example, if a center makes a turkey sandwich using either ABC brand turkey breast or XYZ brand turkey breast, the standardized recipe should include the required weight of ABC brand and the required weight of XYZ brand. Alternatively, the CACFP sponsor could develop a separate standardized turkey sandwich recipe for each brand of deli meat. For information on standardized recipes, visit the "[Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in CACFP Child Care Programs](#)" or "[Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#)" sections of the CSDE's CACFP webpages.



Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP

Comparing Cost

The deli product with the lowest cost per pound might not be the least expensive. CACFP sponsors should consider the cost per ounce of the meat/meat alternates component, instead of the cost per ounce of meat. This provides a more accurate reflection of the product's cost in CACFP meals and snacks. Table 2 shows a sample cost comparison.

Table 2. Cost comparison of sample deli meats				
Food item	Price per pound	Price per ounce	Amount to provide 1 ounce of meat/meat alternates ¹	Cost of 1 ounce of meat/meat alternates
Sample product A: Deli meat with liquids, binders, and extenders	\$4.99	\$.31	1.7 ounces ²	\$.53
Sample product B: Deli meat without liquids, binders, and extenders	\$6.99	\$.44	1 ounce	\$.44
<p>¹ Products with added liquids, binders, and extenders require a CN label or PFS to document the amount of the meat/meat alternates component per serving. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP and Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP.</p> <p>² This information would be obtained from the product's PFS.</p>				

Sample product A (deli meat with liquids, binders, and extenders) costs \$2 less per pound than sample product B (deli meat without liquids, binders, and extenders). However, when the menu planner compares the cost based on 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component, a serving of sample product A costs 53 cents and a serving of sample product B costs 44 cents. Sample product A requires almost twice the weight of sample product B to provide 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component, due to the added liquids, binders, and extenders.

Determining the cost per ounce of meat/meat alternates helps CACFP sponsors decide if the required meal pattern serving for a specific brand of deli meat is reasonable and cost effective.

Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP

Considerations for Reducing Choking Risks for Young Children

Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. Large chunks or cubes of deli meats are choking hazards. Consider children's age and developmental readiness when deciding how to offer deli meats in preschool menus. This consideration is also important for children or adult participants with a disability that requires dietary restrictions. For additional guidance, visit the "[Choking Prevention](#)" section of the CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Resources

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Accepting_Processed_Product_Documentation_CACFP.pdf

Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Credit_Commercial_MMA_CACFP.pdf

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Meat/Meat Alternates Component for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers/Documents#MMA>

Meat/Meat Alternates Component for CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Documents#MMA>

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Meats/Meat Alternates (M/MA) in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Meats-Meat_Alternates_Fillable_508.pdf

Questions and Answers on Alternate Protein Products (APP) (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/questions-and-answers-alternate-protein-products-app>

Resources for the CACFP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/Resources_CACFP_Meal_Patterns.pdf

Reviewer's Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements for Meat/Meat Alternates (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/reviewer_checklist.pdf

Serving Meats and Meat Alternates at Lunch and Supper in the USDA CACFP (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/serving-meats-meat-alternates-lunch-supper-cacfp>

Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP

Standardized Recipe Form for the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Standardized_Recipe_Form_CACFP.docx

Standardized Recipes in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers/Documents#StandardizedRecipes>

Standardized Recipes in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Documents#StandardizedRecipes>

Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement (USDA):

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Using_CN_labels_CACFP.pdf

Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP (CSDE):

http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Using_Product_Formulation_Statements_CACFP.pdf

Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP



For more information, visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages, or contact the [CACFP staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Credit_Deli_CACFP.pdf.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, levy.gillespie@ct.gov.